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They're After Bush

As far as we know, George Bush — President Ford's nominee to head the Central Intelligence Agency — is a man of honor and untouched by the tentacles of Watergate. His career has been one free from scandal and he is regarded as a capable man.

But now some voices are being heard in the Senate in opposition to Bush's nomination. According to the Christian Science Monitor, Senate Majority Whip Robert C. Byrd now agrees with critic Mike Mansfield, Senate majority leader, that he will not vote for Bush unless the latter publicly removes himself from consideration for the vice-presidential nomination.

Their reason, presumably, is that Bush is too closely tied to politics to run what most senators think should be a politically independent agency. And they are said to be "deeply concerned" that Bush is a possible vice-presidential selection for next year. Sen. Frank Church of Idaho, another Democrat, also is sniping away at Bush's nomination.

What they seem to be saying is that George Bush might play politics with the CIA, that the possibility of some Watergate-type hanky-panky could arise under his directorship, and that Bush has been too closely tied to politics to run a tight ship with the intelligence gathering agency.

It all sounds like political sharpshooting to us. Bush's reputation is solid on both sides of the political aisle. Why suddenly should doubts be raised that reflect on his integrity?

We're more inclined to go along with Sen. Richard S. Schweiker who, although he believes that as a general practice a politician who is a former national party chairman ought not to head the CIA, holds that Bush is an exception — a straight-shooter who is well suited to the post.

If a politician is a straightshooter, it follows he would be a straight arrow in whatever federal assignment he is handed — head of the CIA or vice president, for that matter.